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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAMA 001891

SIPDIS

NSC FOR DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR HADLEY

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [AU](#) [IZ](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR HADLEY'S DECEMBER 5 MEETING WITH AUSTRALIAN DEFENSE MINISTER HILL

Classified by A/DCM Hallie H. Hahn for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary

11. (C) Deputy National Security Advisor Hadley met with Australian Defense Minister Robert Hill December 5 on the margins of the IISS Gulf Security Dialogue conference in Manama. Hill said that Australia is staying in the Iraq coalition and is looking at how its forces can be more useful. DNSA Hadley suggested that the GOA might alter the mission of its troops as a way to reaffirm its commitment. Hill noted that he had discussed possible alternatives with General Casey in Baghdad, including logistics training, leadership/command and control training, force protection for the Japanese, and patrolling border areas. DNSA Hadley suggested protecting UN assets in Iraq. DNSA Hadley expressed his concern that the intimidation campaign was proving to be a strategic threat. The coalition should take the fight to the enemy and intimidate the intimidators. Hill said it was important that average Iraqis feel that they are winners in the political process. Turning to Asia, Hill said that the GOA is working closely with the new administration in Indonesia. DNSA Hadley said that the USG is concerned about a possible EU move to lift the ban on arms sales to China. Hill agreed to take this message back to Canberra, and said Australia supports U.S. policy on North Korea. End Summary.

Australia Committed to Iraq Coalition

12. (C) Deputy National Security Advisor Hadley opened his December 5 meeting with Australian Defense Minister Robert Hill by recognizing the difficult and dangerous work the United States and Australia carry out together in Iraq and Afghanistan. The relationship between the President, PM Howard, and UK PM Blair is very strong. Hill affirmed that Australia is staying in the coalition and stated that the government is looking at how its forces in Iraq can be more useful. The troop contribution is small but offers value added. He recognized that the U.S. had made a huge investment in Iraq and had paid a heavy price. He expressed his appreciation for the American commitment; if the U.S. was not there, "the place would be chaos."

Change in Mission to Maximize Utility

13. (C) DNSA Hadley suggested that Australia might want to alter the mission of its troops in Iraq so as to reaffirm its commitment to the coalition, even if the number of troops did not go up. He noted the perception that the coalition was wasting away, and said that the election results may prompt other nations to contribute troops. The IIIG has stated that it does not want troops coming from neighboring countries, but rather wants to focus on training Iraqis. Hill responded that he had met with General Casey in Baghdad a few days earlier, who had suggested that, now that the Australia contingent had completed training 27 battalions, it could work on logistics training. Hill thought this type of work could be useful. Casey had also proposed that Australia work on leadership/command and control training, which Hill commented is more complicated. Hill suggested to Casey that Australia could take on supporting the Japanese if the Dutch contingent departs, but Casey thought this offers limited utility from a military perspective. Hill noted that it is important for Japan to stay in the coalition, and Australia could provide the necessary force protection. Alternatively, the Australian troops could help patrol border areas.

14. (C) DNSA Hadley said that controlling the border is important, but in the case of Syria, is not enough. Syria is serving as a mustering point for jihadists to get money, training, and equipment. Shutting down these centers would take pressure off controlling the border. Another issue to consider is protecting UN assets in Iraq. The MNF-I is reluctant to take this on because it is less important from an operational perspective.

Intimidate the Intimidators

15. (C) DNSA Hadley stated that the intimidation campaign, particularly the killing of police, is proving to be a strategic threat. An Iraqi who sides with the coalition, he commented, demonstrates a lot of courage. But the election could change the dynamic and make it easier for Iraqis to side with the GOI. Hill responded that the owner of the building occupied by the Australian Embassy in Baghdad told the Embassy that he wants them to leave the property. He and his family had received threats, and a member of the family had been killed. DNSA Hadley said that the coalition should find a way to take the fight to the enemy, to intimidate the intimidators. Hill said it is important that average Iraqis feel that they are winners in the political process. DNSA Hadley agreed, and suggested that the IIG find a way to get funds for reconstruction projects directly into the hands of the property owners, so they can make decisions about how the money is spent. He noted that many Iraqis are hesitant to take work on coalition-funded reconstruction projects because of the threats.

Relations with Asia

16. (C) Turning to issues closer to home, Hill said that the GOA is working closely with the new administration in Indonesia, encouraging the government to continue moving in the right direction. DNSA Hadley commented that the President had met with the new Indonesian president in Chile, and he had made a good impression. Hill said that southern Thailand is not good right now, and the Philippines seems to be struggling. However, Australia now has better relations with Malaysia. Burma continues to move in the wrong direction; Australia has tried many policy formulations but nothing seems to work. The Pacific states are strained, dealing with a culture clash and bad habits 20 years after independence. DNSA Hadley said that the USG had spoken with the Europeans about the proposal to lift the EU ban on arms sales to China. The reaction in Washington would be very negative. The Europeans would sell hardware to China that could be used to kill Americans in the area. Hill promised to take this message back to Canberra. He continued that Australia supports what the U.S. wants to do about North Korea. DNSA Hadley said that China is the key - rather than trying to be a broker, it should pick a side and lean on the North Koreans.

17. (U) Baghdad minimize considered.

18. (C) The NSC cleared this message.

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